

**Statement of the OSCE Secretary General  
On the role of Regional Organizations in the implementation of the  
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

**As delivered at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit 2015**

**New York, 26 September 2015**

**Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great honour to address the Sustainable Development Summit.

There are milestones in history when universal values are translated into political commitments that change the course of events. The adoption of the visionary UN Charter 70 years ago was one of them. So was the Helsinki Final Act, the foundational document of the OSCE, signed 40 years ago, pioneering a comprehensive concept of security embracing human rights and democracy, economics and the environment, as well as politico-military aspects.

Today's gathering of world leaders and major stakeholders promises to be another historic turning point – a turning point that regenerates hope, re-energizes action, and re-invigorates partnerships.

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda is built around five pillars: *peace, people, planet, prosperity, and partnerships*. I will structure my remarks in the same way, stressing the OSCE engagement in addressing these five key priorities.

Let me start with “*peace*”. We convene at a critical time for global and regional security. Armed conflict is once again a reality on European soil and divisions within the OSCE region are growing, undermining the very foundations of both European and international security. But we also face a range of new transnational threats which are addressed in this Agenda.

The OSCE is first and foremost a security organization. Its comprehensive security concept offers effective tools to promote sustainable development.

We note with pleasure that the 2030 Agenda reinforces the close relationship between peace, security, and development by asserting, “Sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security; and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development.”

One of the OSCE's major contributions to the implementation of this Agenda will be its enduring engagement in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation. The OSCE will continue to serve as a platform for inclusive dialogue and co-operation around hard and soft security issues, which have a direct impact on development.

The second shared priority is *people*. Ensuring lasting peace, democracy and stability for more than a billion people in our 57 participating States in North America, Europe and Asia is a major OSCE objective. Achieving gender equality and empowering women form a cornerstone of our security approach, which protects and promotes the human rights and

dignity of women and men. OSCE efforts to empower women and girls and to mainstream gender into policies and activities at both the State and Organization level are fully compliant with the post-2015 development agenda.

The reality of international migration as a global phenomenon reminds us that we need to develop co-operative, rights-based approaches to ensure that migration can continue to act as a powerful catalyst for development. Efficient migration policy frameworks, including at the regional level, are a key ingredient. Here again, the OSCE can offer a unique platform for dialogue and provide expertise drawing on our comprehensive and cross-dimensional security concept.

The OSCE is also fostering peaceful and inclusive societies. We have developed specific tools and programmes tailored to help governments address the root causes of intolerance and discrimination, and we will continue to promote the values of acceptance, integration, and tolerance for diversity.

This brings me to the third shared priority, our “*planet*”. The OSCE recognizes the two-way relationship between environment and security, and we bring the security perspective to the international environmental discourse. The OSCE will support the accomplishment of some of the sustainable development goals in its region. Goal 6 on water and Goal 13 on climate change are the primary examples.

The OSCE will continue to facilitate co-operation among riparian states with shared water resources, and we will make full use of the potential offered by water diplomacy to increase security and stability in our region.

We will strive to identify security impacts of climate change in the local, national and regional context and to develop transboundary climate change adaptation strategies. In less than 9 weeks the Paris Climate Conference, COP 21, will convene, and hopes are high for a new global agreement. We will support the “Road to Paris” by organizing an OSCE Security Days event devoted to “Climate Change and Security” on 28 October, at our Headquarters in Vienna.

The OSCE will also continue to be a leader in promoting environmental democracy in our region. The OSCE-supported network of Aarhus Centres, which now includes 59 Centres in 14 countries, provides tools for increasing access to information, public participation, and access to justice in the sustainable development sphere, as well as for increasing transparency and accountability. Together, these efforts strengthen security and stability within and across borders.

Our increasing engagement in promoting sustainable energy, disaster risk reduction, and prevention of both trafficking in hazardous waste and chemicals and in wildlife will contribute towards achieving Goals 7, 11 and 15. By bringing together major energy producing, transit and consuming countries, the OSCE will continue to play a key role in the development of a positive approach towards energy security.

Our fourth shared priority is “*prosperity*”. Good economic governance, the rule of law and economic developments are the prerequisites for peaceful and prosperous communities and nations. The OSCE’s activities promoting international economic co-operation, enhancing the climate for business and investment, streamlining regulatory frameworks and countering

corruption, money laundering and terrorism financing will continue at an increasing pace as we support the implementation of the new Agenda.

Finally, the fifth shared priority is “*partnerships.*” We are not alone in all our endeavours. United in our common goal to ensure peace and security, the OSCE is joining efforts, first and foremost with the UN, but also with many other partner organizations to forge effective responses to traditional and emerging challenges. The Environment and Security – ENVSEC-Initiative is a concrete example of this approach. Our lasting partnership with UNDP and other specialized UN agencies will continue to enable joint and co-ordinated action in support of the new Sustainable Development Agenda.

But we also need to move beyond this. We need to build strong partnerships including governments, the corporate world, financial institutions, and civil society to forge the strong coalition needed to implement our visionary but challenging Sustainable Development Agenda.

Achieving its goals within the next 15 years will take major efforts by all stakeholders – and these efforts will be made stronger by partnerships and co-operation.

But we have no time waste. We must seize this opportunity and work together to bring peace and prosperity to people in every corner of our planet.

I thank you.